

SOME SHORT STORIES ABOUT CHINA AND THE CHINESE.



The Religion of China.

Buddhism is the principal religious faith of the Chinese. Long as this religion has existed, it is little understood by Americans. Its founder, Buddha, was born 623 years before the Christian era. His theory of deity embraced a trinity, known as the Three Precious Ones. The moral code of the religion contains ten prohibitions—killing, stealing, lying, selling wine, charging interest on loans, speaking false of others, self-praise and back-biting, parsimony and scoffing, uncorrected anger and reviling the Three Precious Ones.

The Buddhist church in Tibet has its pope, its cardinals, its bishops, priests and nuns, exactly as has the Roman Catholic church. And more, it has infant baptism, confirmation, candles, sacred water and processions. The teachings of Buddha were reduced to writing 93 B. C. The entire canon of the faith was compiled in A. D. 400. In this Buddha is described as coming from heaven, being born of a virgin, welcomed by angels, received by an old saint, presented in a temple, baptized with water and later by fire. He is described as astonishing the doctors with his underness, where he was tempted by the devil, and thereafter he went about doing wonders and preaching. He was a friend to the poor.

It seems doubtful when Buddhism was introduced into China. It is recorded, however, that in the year 63 A. D. the emperor, Han-Ming-Ti, had a vision wherein he saw a great golden image around whose head was a halo, and it was believed it meant truth. The emperor's brother, Prince Tsai, having heard of Buddhism from India, said the vision was nothing but the great Buddha. A mission was sent forth, which returned after some years, bringing back a wooden image, a counterpart of the golden one, one book and a Hindu priest.

The great temple at Peking, called the Yung-Ho-Kung, or the Lama temple, is a Mongol Buddhist monastery, in which there are some 1,200 acting priests. Here the dogmas of Buddhism are taught under the control of a Gagan, or living Buddha.

The studies comprise a course of instruction in metaphysics, ascetic duties, astrology and medicine.

Many Chinese are Confucians. These follow the teachings of Confucius, which are the worship of ancestors. One of the provisions of this creed is that no son shall live more expensively than his father or mother.

Chinese Deities.

Contrary to general supposition, the deities of the Chinese are not mythical. Each of them is supposed to be

patterned after and to embody the noble traits of some man who has lived in the past. Confucianism is now well understood, and both Buddhism and Taoism have been so thoroughly explored that it is hard to believe that anything of importance relating thereto is to be discovered. At least one more book upon this topic, however, remains to be compiled—namely, a Chinese mythological dictionary. Such a work should contain an account of all the principal divinities actually worshiped by the Chinese, with authentic details of such as are historical, together with a record of the steps by which many of them have been promoted in the Chinese pantheon, until, like Kuan-Ti, the god of war, from very humble beginnings they have become "adjuvant of heaven." The number of these divinities is very large and includes many that have been continuously worshiped for over 1,000 years. Whether the Chinese have ever at any time in their long history had perception or conception of one true God, "Father and Creator of all things," is a question that has been long and learnedly discussed by scholarly students of their classical writings. It is still an open question. But there is no doubt at all that for many centuries past they have worshiped the sun, the moon, the stars and a host of ancestral deities. All the gods of China may be said to have been dead men, and, by the right of ancestral worship, it may be affirmed that in a sense all the dead men of China are gods. Temples are constantly erected, by the consent of the emperor, to men who, while living, have in various ways distinguished themselves. It is impossible to say that any one of these men may not, in the slow evolution of ages, rise to the highest place among the national divinities. There can, therefore, be no doubt whatever that as a nation the Chinese are polytheistic.

Chinese Superstition.

Similar in some respects to the celebration of Christmas in Christian countries is the observance of the devil's birthday in China. On this anniversary many costly gifts are laid upon the altar of the evil one. There are many other superstitions current. In sending the kitchen god to heaven every year, the Chinese housekeeper has to burn it and let the fumes ascend. It reports on the good deeds of the family for the year and brings good luck. Before burning it the housewife dips her finger in a jar of molasses and smears the upper and lower lip of the idol, so that when he arrives at the pearly city he may tell a sweet tale on the family and thus insure benedictions. A family, when gambling, will cover the eyes of the idol until the card playing is through.

A woman in Luhoh city went to the temple to pray for the recovery of her son from smallpox. He recovered, but was marked with the effects of the disease. She returned to the temple in a great rage, put a coil of rope around the idol's neck and sowed it several times in the river, saying: "I'll teach you to lose your benign influence, you rascal."

Cessions to Foreign Powers.

Each conflict in which China has engaged has resulted in a loss of territory. The principal cessions made by the Mongol government as the price of peace have been the following: The island of Formosa was ceded to Japan in 1895, after the war with China. In 1897 Germany seized the port of Kiou-Chou on the east coast of the Shantung peninsula, her excuse for so doing being a massacre of missionaries which had taken place there. Two months later she received from China a ninety-nine year lease of the port and district. In 1898 Russia obtained from China a twenty-five-year lease of Port Arthur, Taitienwan and their adjacent territories and waters. The lease can be extended by mutual agreement. The same year the Chinese government gave permission for Great Britain to occupy Wei-Hai-Wei for as long a period as Russia shall hold Port Arthur. To compensate France for the concessions given to Great Britain and Russia a ninety-nine-year lease was given her of the bay of Kwang-Chau-Wan, on the coast opposite the island of Hainan, and last year two islands at the entrance of the bay were definitely ceded to her. Hong-Kong was ceded to Great Britain in 1841.

The Chinese Treaty.

The treaty between the United States and China negotiated in 1858 and proclaimed in 1860 provided that the Chinese government should guarantee protection to the American minister in his journeys to and from Peking, and should protect him and his suite while in Peking. The treaty of 1868, negotiated by William H. Seward and Anson Burlingame, provides for the protection of American citizens, American property, and American trade. In article 1 it is declared: "Nothing in this article shall be construed to prevent the United States from resisting an attack by any hostile power or party upon their citizens or their property."

Technical Training.

One of the best testimonials to the value of technical training as fitting a young man to become a successful wage-earner immediately is found in the report of the Georgia School of Technology. The school, which is in

Atlanta, was established in December, 1897. The legislature appropriated \$10,000 on condition that friends of the school would add \$10,000 more. This was easily raised, and in 1898 about \$20,000 worth of machinery and \$13,500 of material was given it. The textile department, which is said to be one of the best in the country, was a new feature of education in Georgia, and one that became popular at once. Instruction is given in manufacture of all grades of cotton goods, in manual training, chemistry, dyeing, design, and engineering. The report of the institution states that of the ninety-four living graduates all but nine are employed in pursuits for which they have been fitted by their training at the school. They are mechanical engineers, superintendents of cotton mills, in machine shops, chemical factories, oil mills, and other establishments of the same kind, nearly all being in positions of authority and commanding good wages. No better evidence of the practical value of practical training could be asked than this.

The Late Senator Gear.

The late Senator Gear was one of the most familiar figures at the capital, having been a member of the Fifty-first, Fifty-second and Fifty-third Congresses, and a senator for the last six years. He was re-elected to the Senate by the Iowa legislature last winter, but the present term will not expire until next March. He was also assistant secretary of the treasury under President Harrison, after he was defeated for re-election to the Fifty-second Congress. In the House of Representatives he was one of the most industrious members, and also one of the clearest-headed business men.



Senator Gear.

He was a member of the ways and means committee in the Fifty-first Congress, which framed the McKinley tariff bill, and his knowledge of business affairs made him one of the valued advisers of Chairman McKinley, who intrusted to him the framing of the free-sugar clause in that work. The sobriquet of "Old Business" given to Mr. Gear while governor of Iowa followed him to Washington, and in the House and in the Senate he was familiarly called "Old Business."

The franchises of nearly 1,000 corporations in Texas have been revoked because of their failure to pay the state taxes.

THE REDEMPTION OF RALPH MORTON

When Miss Amy Warden, only child of the wealthy broker, Anthony Warden, tripped into her father's office one December afternoon she was the embodiment of beautiful, healthful, 18. Nodding kindly toward the clerks, who had for a moment ceased their scribbling, she approached the door of her father's private office. A privileged character, as she well knew, turned the knob gently, intending to surprise him in the usual way.

As she peeped into the dimly lighted room she discovered at a glance that her father was not there; but his confidential clerk, Ralph Morton, a good-looking young man of twenty-five, was standing before the desk. For a space she was puzzled by the young man's peculiar actions—for he raised his hand twice to the side of his head, then, as if undecided, slowly lowered it again, and each time she caught the gleam of polished metal as it flashed in the rays from the electric bulb. Then, as if fully decided upon his action, he partly turned his face toward her; but she, noticing the tenseness of his white features, realized in a flash the awful import of his action, and darting across the room, snatched the deadly weapon from his hand and held it behind her. For a space he stood, regarding with wild eyes the beautiful, terrified face before him, then, utter-



ing a low groan, he sank into a chair and hid his face in his hands. She stood looking at him, the color gradually returning to her face; then she said, a wondering pity in her tone: "O, Mr. Morton, how could you think of such a thing?"

He slowly raised his head and met her pitying gaze wildly. "Why, do you stop me, Miss Warden?" he said brokenly. "I am a thief! I caught the accused fever of speculation and used your father's money. I prefer death to discovery and dishonor."

His eyes closed as if blinded by her accusing gaze.

"And do you imagine this will save you from dishonor?" she said, gently holding out the revolver. "O, Mr. Morton, do you not realize that it will only add to it? Will such an act restore my father's money or absolve you in the eyes of the world and—God?" Infinite pity shone in her eyes as she softly breathed the last word.

He did not look up, and she continued: "You are young and talented. Mr. Morton, perhaps above the average. The world is before you. Do you presume to dictate in this way to the tender mercy that has bestowed such priceless gifts upon you? My father may not overlook this, but there is one, at least, who will. How much money have you to—used?" she concluded.

He threw out his hands despairingly. "More than I can pay," he faltered. "Two thousand dollars at least."

She remained silent so long that he

ventured to look at her. She seemed to look beyond him, a smile like that of a pleased child on her now flushed face—the warmth of a high, noble resolve.

Your case requires no such desperate remedy as this," she said, turning her face a little from the growing eagerness of his gaze. "Supposing that I—I replace this money, would—"

He sprang to his feet. No, Miss Warden, he cried, entreatingly. "You must not think of such a thing. I have sinned; I must suffer."

"You must do as I say, Mr. Morton," she firmly replied. "My father, I know, would not forgive you; but that is no reason for sacrificing your future career. Besides, you can repay me some day."

He regarded her through a mist of tears, then held out his hand. "I will accept your offer, Miss Warden—the offer of an angel," he said, unaskingly. "But I must leave this place to redeem myself among a strange people."

She started a little, but, laying her soft hand in his, whispered: "It may be for the best; but, wherever you go, God be with you," and she left him.

Five years had passed by when Ralph Morton again entered the city of his past folly. He did not bring the proverbial fortune, but he had amassed a competence which many less fortunate might envy.

During all this time he had never forgotten the sweet-faced young girl—his savior. Thrice had he written to her, but no answer came; and now when he went to the old office, he was told that Anthony Warden had died three years previously and had died, leaving his daughter penniless.

He determined to find her if money, backed by love, could do so, but all search was unavailing. She had disappeared, like many unfortunates, into that mysterious realm where despair, perhaps, is the larger portion.

"You will find her yet, Ralph," said his friend, Dr. Banks, to whom Ralph Morton had confided his story. It was a bleak winter evening, and they were on their way to the doctor's house.

"Heaven will surely guide me to her," answered Ralph.

As they turned into a side street a young woman a short distance ahead stopped and uttered a low cry. A drunken ruffian had barred her path. He had already grasped her arm when Morton, running forward, planted a well-directed blow that sent him reeling.

Ralph caught the young woman, half fainting, in his arms; then, as the doctor hurried up, he turned her face to the light. It was a thin, pale face, though beautiful—a beauty matured by days of struggle and sorrow.

Ralph Morton almost dropped the light burden, as he gasped: "It is she—Amy! O, Fred, thank heaven I have found her at last!"

It was in the doctor's cozy house, after he and his wife left them alone, that he said: "You were my guardian angel once, Amy; will you continue to be such? The debt I owe you can only be repaid with a life's devotion. Will you accept it, dearest?"

And she whispered: "I believe I loved you then, Ralph; at least I was sorry to have you go."—Boston Post.

A Persian Dinner.

The feast is preceded by pipes, while tea and sweets are handed about. Then the servants of the house appear bringing in a long leather sheet, which they spread in the middle of the floor. The guests squat around this, tailor-fashion. When all are seated, a flat loaf of bread is placed before everyone, and the music begins to play. The various dishes are brought in on trays and arranged around the leather sheet at intervals. The covers are then removed, the host says "Bismillah" (in the name of God), and, without another word, they all fall to.—London Globe.

Even the man who is his own best friend sometimes gets left.

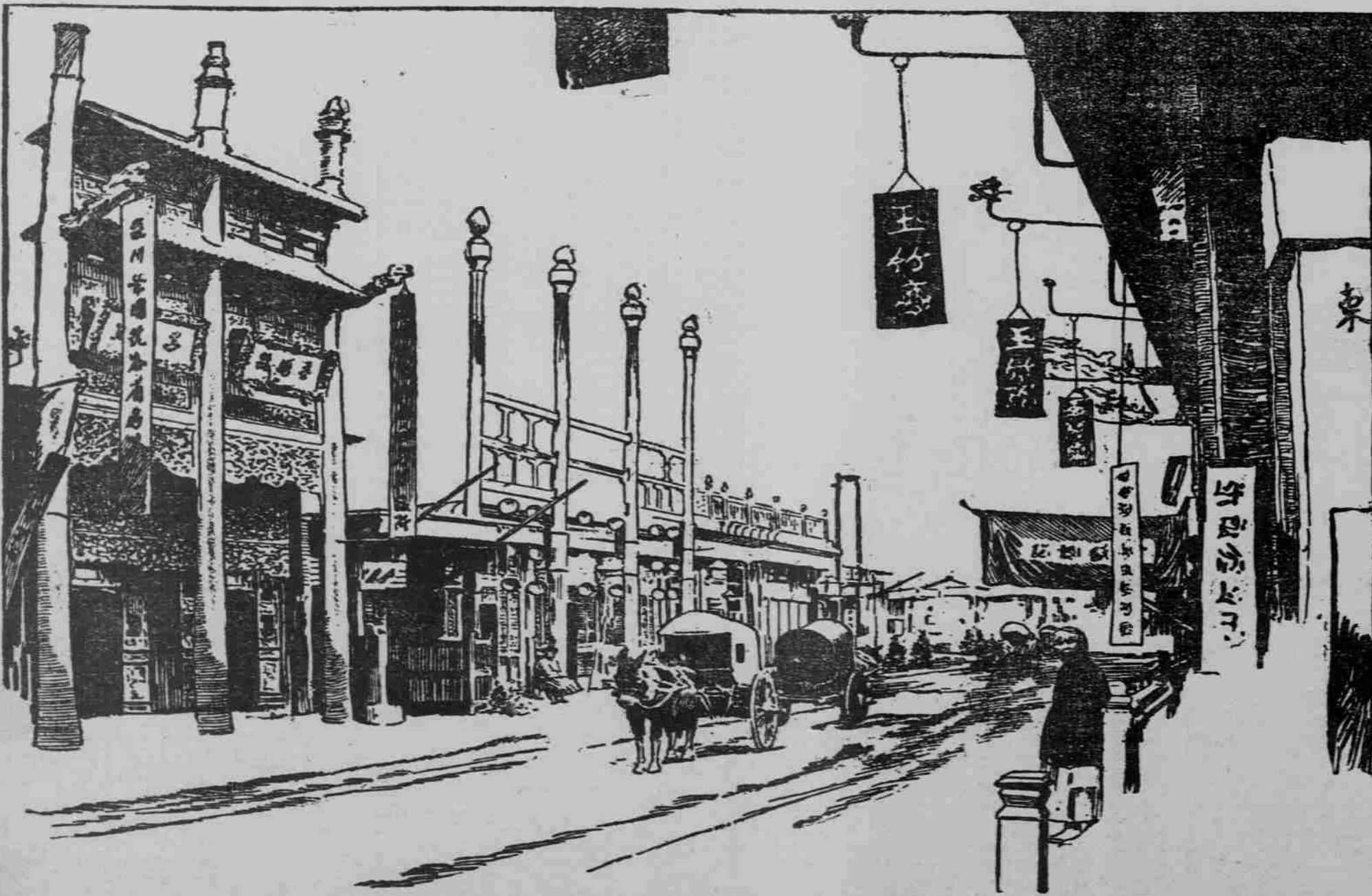
FREAKS OF "CLOUD-BURSTS."

ROCKY MOUNTAIN CAMPERS CAUGHT IN ONE OF THEM.

Cloudbursts are sometimes very destructive of life as well as of property. They come up so suddenly that it is almost impossible to escape if the wayfarer is caught in the bed of the creek. Campers in the mountain regions usually select the high ground above the creek rather than pitch their tent beside the gently rippling water, which may become a roaring torrent while they sleep, sweeping them to destruction before they know that danger is near. It was from neglect of this precaution that many lives were lost in a cloudburst near Morrison, Colo., in the spring of 1897. Some people were camping along the borders of the stream, and, as it was just after dark, and had been raining heavily, they had sought the shelter of their tents. Suddenly they heard the awful and peculiar roar of the approaching cloudburst. It grew louder every second. Realizing what had happened, the unfortunate campers—men, women and children—rushed from their tents and tried to reach the higher ground. In the confusion and darkness some turned the wrong way, and were soon struggling in mad torrents, battling with tree trunks and wrecks of cabins and immense masses of moving stone in the bosom of the flood. Thirteen lives went out in that dire night. The bodies found later showed the marks of buffeting with the debris in the flood of waters and it is believed that

few if any of the unfortunates lost their lives by actual drowning.

Occasionally the sudden downpour of rain will be precipitated on a soft yielding soil, and instead of taking the form of a cloudburst with a wave of water carrying everything before it, the whole surface of the ground will take on the consistence of molasses and roll slowly but irresistibly down the water courses. This happened in Chalk Canon, near Mount Princeton, in Colorado, three years ago. Chalk cliffs are a peculiar formation at the head of the canyon, the so-called "chalk" being of a lime nature, which, after being dissolved in water, quickly hardens again like cement. A cloudburst began high up on the sides of the mountain, washed away tons of material from the cliffs and rolled the mass slowly over the railroad tracks like the pour of lava from Vesuvius. The tracks were covered to a depth of six feet. A gang of workmen was put to work on the deposit, but it oozed in on the tracks as fast as the men shoveled it out. Finally all work was suspended, and the overflow hardened so quickly that a track was built over it. Within six hours of the breaking of the storm trains were running over the deposit. So hard did the "chalk" become that the railroad has never penetrated to the old tracks, and in the excavating that was done in relaying the tracks permanently dynamite had to be used.—Ainslee's Magazine.



ONE OF THE STREETS OF THE NATIVE QUARTER OF PEKIN BURNED BY THE MORS OF FANATICAL CHINESE.